

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of the Riverside City Council Meeting

Held on

Thursday, May 18, 2023

Riverside, OH

CALL TO ORDER: Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch called the Riverside, Ohio, City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Riverside Administrative Offices located at 5200 Springfield Street, Suite 100, Riverside, Ohio, 45431.

ROLL CALL: Council attendance was as follows: Mr. Denning, present; Mrs. Franklin, present; Ms. Fry, present; Mr. Joseph, present; Ms. Lommatzsch, present; Mr. Maxfield, absent; and Mayor Williams, absent.

Staff present was as follows: Josh Rauch, City Manager; Tom Garrett, Finance Director; Kim Baker, Finance Administrator; Dalma Grandjean, Law Director; and Katie Lewallen, Clerk of Council.

EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS: Mr. Joseph moved, seconded by Mr. Denning, to excuse Councilman Maxfield and Mayor Williams. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA: No corrections were made.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Denning moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to approve the agenda. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE: Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch led the pledge of allegiance.

PROCLAMATION: Councilwoman Brenda Fry read a proclamation for Mental Health Awareness Month and presented it to Ms. Tina Rezash-Rogel from Montgomery County ADAMHS. Ms. Rezash-Rogel mentioned the newspaper that had that article of mental health issues children are now facing. She stated that the data shows 7,000 children were taken to Dayton Children's Hospital in 2022 with mental health challenges. This is at the forefront of their minds at ADAMHS. They want to take care of the kids, but they are also seeing a spike in mental health challenges and overdose deaths with adults as well. She added that this is critical to raise the awareness of the challenges facing the community. She thanked Mr. Joseph who puts this in the forefront every year and is thankful to be receiving this proclamation for a second year in a row.

Ms. Fry asked if the Crisis Care Center is up and running. Ms. Rezash-Rogel stated they had a ribbon cutting a couple of weeks ago, and they are currently onboarding and training staff. They are getting all the licensing needed and in place. The crisis receiving center is at 1 Elizabeth Place where first responders are able to take individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Their goal is to keep individuals out of the hospital and out of jail. The crisis receiving center will help the community meet individuals where they with the mobile crisis response team and have a place for first responders take the individuals to get them the treatment they need. She believes they will be open and running some time over the summer. She added that Montgomery County will be

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the first county in the country to have all three prongs of the Crisis Now model in place: a crisis call center, a mobile crisis response team, and a crisis receiving center.

PRESENTATION: State Representative Willis Blackshear Jr. stated he represents the 38th House District, which includes Dayton, Riverside, and parts of Huber Heights. He saw the article Ms. Rezash-Rogel referred to about Ohio deaths by suicide increasing to the second leading cause for ages 10 to 34. He stated they need to prioritize mental health, especially at a young age, as it is steadily growing. He discussed the importance of mental health awareness and the efforts he has been making through legislation. House Bill #38 is a student mental health bill, reintroduced from the last general assembly. They realize the urgent need to think about students and educators. Covid heightened the need to prioritize mental health. This bill allows students to take up to three mental health days that can be in school for schools that have the capacity to implement an in school support program or out of school. These are excused absences and do not count as truancy. He stated that there is a foundation and parameters, and it can vary school district to school district. It is permissive as they are not forcing schools to implement this. It provides schools the bandwidth to refer students and even teachers to mental health services however they see fit. He added that the school will have the ability to set when a student can and cannot take off for a mental health day. He stated he introduced a bill that does not have a number, yet, but it will designate April as Counseling Awareness Month. This will shed more light on the need for counsellors. This bill highlights what counsellors do and honors and celebrates the counsellors currently in practice. Mental health used to be considered a taboo. This is no longer the case, and they need to address it head on; he believes it will bring strong benefits for communities.

Mr. Joseph thanked both of them for coming out and discussing mental health awareness. He hopes people understand and see they are not alone with mental health issues as the city, county, and state are working together to make efforts into mental health initiatives. He spoke on a personal matter involving mental health.

Mr. Blackshear thanked Mr. Joseph for extending the offer to come and say a few words. He stated that increased funding is something that they fought for in the budget and they will continue to advocate for. They can have services, but if the services don't have money, then there are only so many people that can be helped.

Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch added that in schools when money is scarce, those are the positions that get cut. It is unfortunate. Mental health is a viable problem nationwide. She thanked him for sharing and taking the heat and keep pressing.

Mr. Joseph suggested they may want to look into the involuntary commitment process. If someone doesn't care for themselves and makes comments of self-harm; they have to in the presence of a first responder, or a doctor make a statement and also have a plan to do that or else there is nothing anyone can do.

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Ms. Baker stated that there are resource issues because her family has been a part of the statistics they are talking about. She is appreciative the city is recognizing this. She shared a personal story with council. She added that her daughter has gone to Dayton Children's Hospital and if they don't have a bed, then they turn them away. When you tell a child they need help, and there aren't any resources then parents are looking to representatives and help. She is appreciative of what both Ms. Rezach-Rogel and Mr. Blackshear is doing.

MINUTES: Mr. Denning moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2023, council business meeting. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

WRITTEN CITIZEN PETITIONS: One petition was turned in to the clerk.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES:

A) Police Department – Chief Robinson stated they are three officers down but have had two candidates come in and both of those have moved on to the background phase. One officers currently in the FTO program is going into the shadowing phase next week; so far, he is doing well. Yesterday, he did have to release a probationary officer from the Field Training Program. Officer Toscani attended the Boston FBI Swatting and Bomb Threat Hoax Training. This will help him working at the school should a call come in threatening; he will be able to process it better. Officer Wargo attending the Butler County Sheriff's Officer Bomb Squad, Dayton Bomb Squad, ATF, and the Department of justice Post Blast Seminar for similar training. This will help to train for any kind of possibility of what could happen. Sergeant Safriet and Officer Matt Jackson attended SWAT Leadership school. Sergeant Safriet is a sniper and on the County SWAT team; Officer Jackson the canine and both want to push forward in their career as leaders in police work. Chief Robinson stated that the new SRO vehicle is currently out getting the wrap put on it. He stated that they noticed the national testing site they use has not been running their stuff continuously. They have now made sure they are doing that for continuous applications. He added that the Flock cameras continue to be installed with a projected completion date of June 13, 2023.

B) Fire Department – Mr. Rauch stated the Interim Chief Taylor is back on duty tomorrow. He stated they were busy earlier in the week with a residential house fire that the State Fire Marshall's office will come in to help investigate. He stated the fire chief recruitment process has been kicked off. The recruiter will be meeting with the battalion chiefs this Saturday to get their thoughts on what they are looking for in a chief. They will get input from council as well. They hope to select a finalist sometime in September. All that is subject to change based on the process.

C) Public Service Department – Ms. Bartlett stated they received bids today on their three-year traffic signal maintenance contract. Security Fence Group is their lowest

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bidder. They have been the contractor for many years now. They are currently reviewing resumes for open seasonal positions and an upcoming maintenance worker position. They continue answering questions from residents on the 2022 paving program construction and billing. She stated Kevin is being inundated with calls on how things were measured and why grass is not coming in. He is doing a good job taking care of the residents. Work on the Airway Bridge in front of the Flying Ace is going to begin on June 5, 2023. This is a Montgomery County Engineer's project; it will take Airway Road down to two lanes, one going each direction. . It will be posted on Facebook next week. She stated the new service department truck is outfitted with lights and decals and is officially in service. She stated they are currently getting quotes to restore electricity to the Rohrer Park Pavilion. She added that she is working with Bill Flaute and the Lion's Club to get more benches in the four main parks, starting with Community Park.

Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch stated she was not aware those benches were made out of plastic bags. Bags can be collected and given to a Lion's Club member, or they can be weighed and taken to Kroger then report the weight to the Lion's Club. She added that she was at the senior recognition on Monday on behalf of the Chamber and can say that Officer Toscani is the most favorite person in town. A lot of the kids made recognition to him through a hug or a handshake because they know him.

D) City Manager Report – Mr. Rauch welcomed Chipotle to the community as there was a ribbon cutting earlier in the week. They have had a good first couple of days. He acknowledged Lori Minnich, Economic Development Specialist, and Nia Holt, and Kathy Bartlett and others who serve on the TRC for their work in the development process to make this project work. He stated he kicked off with Clear Gov in a beta testing module for strategic planning software. He was able to take the document that they produced late last year and start plugging that into their online portal. They are still developing, but it is a strong start for his vision of what it can turn into. He is hopeful and looks to bring this to a work session to show them how it is all laid out. He stated they received good news on aggregation this week. The public has questions about a nine cent rate that was published. SOPEC did recently go through the aggregation bidding process for their Dayton customers, and they were able to negotiate a nine cent rate for the last cycle for Dayton. SOPEC is currently negotiating Riverside's rate. They will know what that is next week. Once it is finalized, residents will receive a letter from SOPEC, and residents can compare for themselves whether they want to opt-out or go with another provider. This is still in process. He stated that it is getting warmer, and folks are getting out and may be a little impatient on the road as there is a lot of construction. A lot of it is state related projects. He asked motorists to please be patient and allow yourself time to get to places especially if people are coming to and through Riverside. The work going on is important work, and traffic will be smoother in the next 12 – 24 months.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS: No forms were turned in for public comment.

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NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTIONS

- I) **Resolution No. 23-R-2846 – A resolution by the Riverside City Council authorizing the assessment of delinquent fines imposed for failure to comply with an order made under the Riverside Unified Development Ordinance.**

Mr. Rauch stated that this is a housekeeping item relating to code enforcement violations that they need to assess back.

Mr. Denning moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to approve Resolution No. 23-R-2846.

All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch invited Mr. John Ziegler to come forward about his item, to list his address, and that he had three minutes.

Mr. John Ziegler, 4238 Blue Rock, Riverside, OH, stated he was originally from Huber Heights, the Third Ward, and moved to Riverside in 1996. He thought today would be a good day to talk about representation since Mr. Blackshear was in attendance. He stated in Riverside they do not have districts or wards, but in Huber Heights they do. In Huber, they were able to work with their representatives in their wards. He said a lot of citizens have questions and try to appeal executive decisions and aren't sure what to do. He stated it would be nice if they could change the city charter or appeal a change; he is not sure how that works. He has been thinking about this for 25 years. Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch thanked Mr. Ziegler and stated it would take a change in the charter. Ms. Fry asked when the next charter review is. The clerk stated it will be January 2024, and they will start the process in August to get people to sit on the review committee.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS: Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch stated the Chipotle opening was wonderful. She added that people have been asked what is opening on that corner, a Dollar General. Mr. Rauch stated he did not have a date or time for that opening, yet.

Mr. Joseph stated there will be a blood drive on May 26, 2023. A recent change from the FDA now allows for homosexual men to donate blood. He stated sign-ups can be done at donortime.com and sign up is very quick. A lot more people are now able to go out and donate. Ms. Fry stated she is excited because it is more inclusive. It is an avenue for people who want to help with the medical need who have been blocked for so many years and to restore that ability is very exciting. Mr. Joseph stated his blood is super non-discriminatory as he is O-negative, a universal donor. Deputy Mayor Lommatzsch added

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that last time she donated she received information on where her blood went within three days and this most recent time she was also notified within three days. She likes knowing where her blood went.

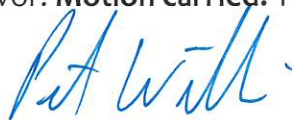
Ms. Fry stated she follows a blogger of 'A life in progress' and she posted an impactful statement. The post read, "My son Jairus made me a mom 27 years ago. I only got to share 23 years with him. This is mental health awareness month, and while I don't know if that makes any difference, I believe that sharing our honest stories absolutely does. Jairus was loved. His mental health struggles, his inner pain, did and does not change that for one second. Also, mental health is a community thing, not only an individual one. Racism, homophobia, violence, stigma around mental health or health challenges, fear about being able to make it financially when a 9-5 lifestyle feels out of reach, these are things that extend far beyond an individuals personal choice. All the mindfulness and resilient skills in the world can't fix all the harsh realities in this world. Community matters. I survived my own pain and trauma because of healthy and brave community." Ms. Fry thanked everyone who shared their stories tonight because that is important. She asked that they remember what role they can play in creating that community to generate mental health for others.

Mr. Denning stated it takes a community to take care of itself; if you see something, say something. Let people know that you care. It is important for everyone. Everyone needs to feel like they are needed and wanted. He congratulated all the graduates from Carroll High School and Stebbins High School.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mrs. Franklin moved, seconded by Mr. Denning, to go into Executive Session for the following reasons: 103.01(1) Unless the City employee or official requests a public hearing; to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of a city employee or official or the investigation of charges or complaints against a City employee or official; and 103.01(2) To consider the purchase of property for public purposes, or for the sale of public property, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal or private interest is adverse to the general public interest. Council went into Executive Session at 6:48 pm.

RECONVENE: Council reconvened at 7:09 pm.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Denning moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to adjourn. All were in favor. **Motion carried.** The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.



Pete Williams, Mayor



Clerk of Council